DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 206 567 SP 017 559

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TITLE Classroom Management.
INSTITUTION Kappa Delta Pi, West Lafayette, Ind.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 35p.: Photographs may not reproduce clearly.
AVAILABLE FROM Kappa Delta Pi, P.O. Box A, West Lafayette, IN 47906 ($4.00).

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Classroom Environment; *Classroom Techniques; *Discipline; Elementary Secondary Education; Interaction; Intervention; Student Behavior; Student Participation; *Student Teacher Relationship; *Teacher Effectiveness; Teaching Methods; Time on Task

ABSTRACT

This booklet describes a foundation for effective classroom management and focuses on some of the basic processes involved in creating a cooperative atmosphere in the classroom. Four topics are considered: the beginning of the school year, selecting and arranging activities, monitoring and timing activities in the classroom, and stopping misbehavior. Examples are offered of effective procedures for dealing with each of these topics. Descriptions are given of successful ways to pace activities to minimize possibilities for misbehavior, selecting occasions for intervention, sequencing classroom activities, and handling transitions from one activity to another. Recommendations are made for dealing with "hard core" disruptive students, punishment, and behavior modification. It is pointed out that effective management requires: (1) extensive knowledge of what is likely to happen in classrooms; (2) ability to process a large amount of information rapidly; and (3) skill in carrying out effective actions over a long period of time. (JD)

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CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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A Message from the President

Publishing and disseminating materials of educational significance has long been a part of the mission of Kappa Delta Pi as an honor society. Walter Doyle's *Classroom Management* represents the first of what is hoped will be a continuing series of booklet-length publications designed to present information of current concern to the teaching profession.

Professor Doyle has written a thoughtful yet concise statement on the management problems faced by teachers in the classrooms of our educational system. It is an important message. The comprehensiveness and orderly presentation of this work will be helpful, not only to new teachers in the profession, but to those already in the field of education.

The publication of this booklet carries a signal message to the educational community and beyond which is of great importance for Kappa Delta Pi. It is more than a suggestion, though. It is a statement that the Society is actively contributing to the body of educational thought and enhancing the sustenance of creative expression, while continuing the legacy left to us by our founders in the transmission of educational ideas. Such publishing activity is an important recognition of dedication to our motto: Knowledge, Duty, and Power.

RICHARD L. JUDD, *National President*
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A KAPPA DELTA PI PUBLICATION

WALTER DOYLE

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

If you want to strike some extra blows for discipline, love children, and help them to love you.

James L. Hymes, Jr., 1955.

Maintaining order in a classroom is a basic task of teaching. From the beginning of their careers, teachers commonly express concern over how to achieve "good discipline" in their classrooms. Students expect their teachers to be able to keep order and admire those who manage classrooms well. The public considers discipline one of the most serious problems facing schools and sees an orderly school as a "good" school.

Recent studies of teaching effectiveness support this popular belief. Students learn more when more time is spent in productive work rather than in confusion and misbehavior. Effective teachers are also effective managers.

Despite the generally recognized importance of classroom management, it has remained a murky area of conflicting ideas and vague rules. Teachers regularly complain that they receive little practical help in facing the realities of teaching.

There are signs of improvement, however. Systematic research on classroom management has increased in recent years. More is now known about what effective managers do.

In this booklet I have attempted to summarize some of this knowledge about how classroom order is accomplished.

*The author is grateful to Carolyn M. Evertson, director of the Classroom Organization and Effective Teaching Program, R&D Center for Teacher Education, University of Texas at Austin, for providing access to data and for many helpful suggestions.

TEACHING IN CLASSROOMS

What kind of place is a classroom? For most teachers, it is a room filled with twenty to thirty students, a comparable number of chairs or desks, and an assortment of shelves, tables, books, pictures, chalkboards, and signs. But this is a static picture. Classrooms are in motion! During school hours a classroom is filled with action: talking, writing, walking, discussing. Even when there is a surface tranquility during seatwork or a test, a classroom is alive and moving. And time is a pervasive reality. A teacher is responsible for a group of students for designated intervals, and classroom life has an intrinsic rhythm.

The complex character of classroom motion can be captured by the following features:

1 IMMEDIACY

Events happen fast in classrooms. There is little time to think before acting. The sheer number of interchanges a teacher has with students is extraordinarily large — often over 1,000 per day. And a teacher must act immediately.

2 PUBLICNESS

Classrooms are public places and the teacher is always on stage. Incidents involving the teacher and one or more students are usually seen by the entire class. Sometimes witnesses encourage disruptive students. At the very least, witnesses learn something about the teacher's ability to manage the classroom and enforce the rules.

3 MULTIDIMENSIONALITY

A classroom is many things: a learning laboratory, a social center, a peer group, a collection of individuals who go to lunch together, and more. Classrooms are also crowded and busy places. Many people must use limited resources to achieve a wide range of objectives. Events must be organized and scheduled; records must be kept. And work must be planned for students who vary widely in abilities and interests.

4 UNPREDICTABILITY

Events in classrooms are not easy to predict. Interruptions are frequent. Immediate circumstances influence the way events unfold during a particular day or class period.

5 HISTORY

A class meets regularly for a long time, typically five days per week for four to nine months. This schedule of meetings means that the way an event is handled at one point in time establishes a precedent for how things are done later. The first few meetings often shape, for better or worse, what is likely to happen the rest of the year.

6 SIMULTANEITY

Many things happen at the same time in classrooms. A reading group operates while the rest of the class does seatwork. Some students finish a test in five minutes while others take ten minutes. One student needs special help to start an assignment while four other students have questions. A teacher listens carefully to a student's answer while three students in the back of the room begin to discuss yesterday's football game.

CLASSROOM DEMANDS

These characteristics are common to all classrooms. They define the distinctive texture of the classroom environment and create classroom demands, pressures that are continually exerted on a teacher as a class moves through time. The intensity of these demands varies, of course, with circumstances. On days before a major holiday, for example, multidimensionality and unpredictability increase as special programs and activities are added to the schedule. Nevertheless, these demands are present to some degree in every classroom at all times.

Experienced teachers have implicit knowledge of classroom demands. They are able to use this knowledge to plan activities and make the many on-the-spot decisions required in the classroom. Beginning teachers face the difficult problem of learning these demands and developing ways to manage them effectively.

THE TASK OF TEACHING IN CLASSROOMS

From a management perspective, a teacher's immediate task is *to gain and maintain the cooperation of students in activities that fill classroom time.* The term "cooperation" is meant to cover several forms of student involvement in classroom events. Ideally, cooperation equals meaningful engagement in academic tasks. But cooperation also includes a willingness to allow an activity to continue without disruption. In some classroom situations achieving this more passive form of cooperation is an imposing task.

The activities a teacher selects must at least *appear* to be related to the objectives of the curriculum. A teacher cannot entertain students with games that have no apparent academic substance. In addition, cooperation must be sustained for several months in a complex environment. Clearly, the task of teaching in classrooms is not easily accomplished.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The approach being developed here emphasizes activities. But what is an activity? Common labels for activities refer to either the organization of work (for example, seatwork, small group discussion, lecture) or content (for example, art, mathematics, or vocabulary). Other key dimensions of an activity are duration, the physical space in which the activity occurs, the type and number of students, the props or resources used, and the expected behavior of students and the teacher.

Some Examples

In a recent report on the teaching of writing in a second grade classroom, Florio gives an excellent description of two activities:

> After the children return from recess, the teacher, standing at the front blackboard, asks them to clear their desks and take out pencils and spelling books. She draws lines on the blackboard. Then she says, "We've been *neglecting* your spelling words." She asks them to pick out the two hardest words from this week's spelling list and write a sentence using each word. . . .The children write quietly at their desks. As they finish, a few of them bring their sentences up to the teacher. She tells them, "Sit down." Finally, as the whispering and shifting in seats increases, the teacher says, "Stand up if you are ready." The teacher calls on children standing at their desks to read their sentences. . . .
>
> After many of the children have shared their sentences, the teacher turns to the lines she has drawn on the blackboard. She says as she does this in brisk, clipped speech, "Up, up! Sit up! Feet on floor. When I say 'ready,' what do you do?" The students reply, "Do we have to write in *cursive*?" The teacher, smiling, says, "Yup." What follows is a lesson in cursive writing in which students use the spelling words from their sentences. The teacher coaches in colorful language — each motion of the pen corresponds to a phrase that the children know. Some of them talk along with her: "Rainbow up, straight back. Rocker, come around, straight, rocker." As children finish their words, they are asked to bring them up to show to the teacher.[1]

Activities and Classroom Order

Classroom order rests fundamentally on activities. Reactions to specific student behaviors are important, but they are not sufficient to accomplish order in the classroom. A teacher must first be able to sustain activities. A central part of a teacher's work, then, consists of selecting and arranging activities to fit within the time constraints imposed by administrative schedules or the attention spans of students. It is like putting pieces into a puzzle, except the puzzle keeps moving.

In the average elementary classroom, pupils spend approximately 65% of allocated academic time in seatwork.

1. Susan Florio, "The Problem of Dead Letters: Social Perspectives on the Teaching of Writing," *Elementary School Journal* 80 (1979): 1-7.

HOW MANAGEMENT IS ACCOMPLISHED

Gaining cooperation in activities depends upon a combination of several factors. The next section focuses on some of the basic processes involved in accomplishing this task. Four topics are considered: (1) beginning the year; (2) selecting and arranging activities; (3) monitoring and timing activities used in the classroom; and (4) stopping misbehavior.

THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR

The beginning of the year is a critical time for achieving order in classrooms. It is a time when basic rules and procedures are established. Moreover, the teacher's ability to manage activities is on display for the first time. Successes or failures at this stage have consequences for the rest of the year.

The Rhythm of Beginning

There is a rhythm to the beginning of the school year. Figure 1 is an attempt to depict the character of this rhythm. The figure maps the frequency and intensity of student misbehavior during the initial phase in the life of a class.

Starting the Year. Figure 1 suggests that students are usually passive, even hesitant, as the teacher begins to explain rules and procedures on the first day of school. The mere statement of rules and procedures is seldom enough, however. Soon after the opening bell, students begin to test the rules and the teacher's management skills. This testing takes several forms: asking questions that are

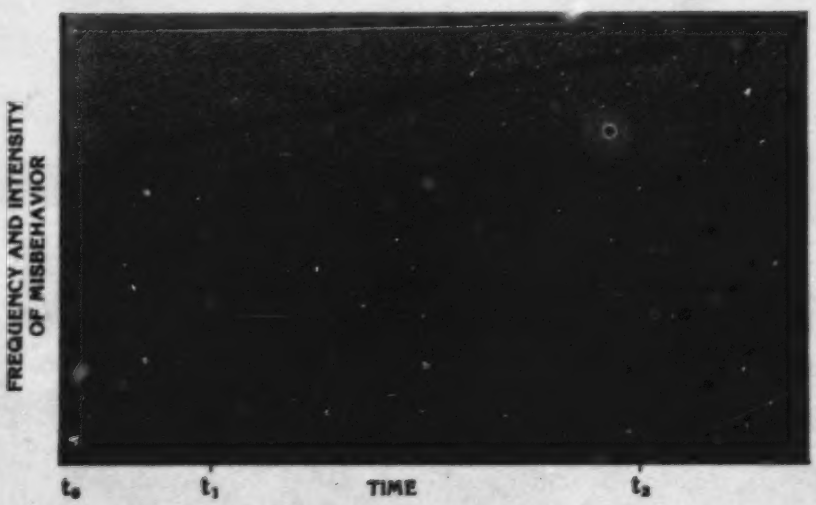


Figure 1. The Rhythm of the Beginning of the Year

Adapted from W. Doyle, "Making Managerial Decisions in Classrooms," in *Classroom Management.* The Seventy-eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 2., ed. D.L. Duke (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 51.

slightly off the topic, failing to follow directions that have already been given, ignoring stated rules about talking and similar behaviors, or even open defiance of the teacher's authority. In other words, students withhold cooperation for some aspects of the rules or procedures of the class.

Testing is typically initiated by only a few students. Given the public character of classrooms, however, the outcomes of these tests are visible to all students.

Achieving order. The solid line in Figure 1 indicates that misbehavior gradually increases at the beginning of the year until a critical point is reached. If the teacher fails to meet the challenges of the early testing, misbehavior continues to increase in frequency and seriousness and more students participate. At some point the teacher will have virtually no control over the class, and very little can be done to improve the situation. This condition is indicated by the broken line in the figure.

If the teacher is successful in handling the testing at the beginning of the year, then incidents of misbehavior decrease until they reach a stable level. Misbehavior still occurs but it is less intense.

The pattern in Figure 1 is very general, of course. Differences exist across grade levels and classrooms. The testing period ($time_0$ to $time_1$ in Figure 1) may take a few hours or several weeks, depending on the teacher's skill and the students' willingness to cooperate. In elementary classrooms, where teachers and students spend the entire day together, the beginning phase is usually over in a few days. Starting the year takes longer at the secondary level, where classes meet for less than one hour a day. Regardless of these differences, the rhythm of the beginning of the year is a common feature of life in the classroom.

How to Begin

Most teachers meet the challenge of student testing and the class settles into routines soon after the year begins. How is this done? Studies of classroom organization and management conducted at the Texas Research Development Center for Teacher Education suggest that successful management of the beginning of the year involves a *combination* of at least three factors:[2]

1. getting activities started and moving as soon as possible;
2. anticipating misbehavior and heading it off before it occurs;
3. becoming aware of misbehavior when it occurs and stopping it early.

2. See Carolyn M. Evertson and Linda M. Anderson, "Beginning School," *Educational Horizons* 57 (1979): 164-68; and Edmund T. Emmer, Carolyn M. Evertson, and Linda M. Anderson, "Effective Classroom Management at the Beginning of the School Year," *Elementary School Journal* 80 (1980): 218-26.

Starting activities. Getting activities started is basic to effective classroom management and order at the beginning of the year. The first activities typically have a simple organizational structure: for example, students can work by themselves at their seats. The work expected of students is usually interesting and easy to accomplish. Instructions are explicit. Teachers are often very active in circulating around the room, helping individual students complete their work, and ushering the activity along. The important factor is that an activity is taking place in the room. As a result, students have something to do. The teacher can also begin to learn how the class as a whole will react to different activities and how individual students will cooperate.

Anticipating misbehavior. Successful classroom managers anticipate misbehavior and head it off before it occurs. They do this by planning rules and procedures in advance and communicating these clearly to the students. They do not assume that students will automatically follow instructions. In the early elementary grades, rules and procedures are often explicitly taught and even rehearsed rather than simply announced. Compliance is carefully monitored until it is clear that students follow procedures routinely.

In one study of first and fifth grade classes, over 30 basic discipline techniques were identified. Verbal reprimands accounted for 58% of the total incidents observed. Of the remaining 42% of incidents, no single technique accounted for more than 3% of the total. The other techniques included: praise, prizes and surprises, manipulation of privileges, physical coercion/affection, generalized threats, isolation, seat changes, repetition of routines, "writing names," and detention.

An example. The following example, taken from a narrative description of a third grade classroom on the first day of school, shows how procedures are explicitly taught in an effectively managed classroom. The teacher has oriented the pupils to the room and reviewed rules and procedures. She then conducts a five minute activity in which the pupils carry out several of these procedures:

> She begins by saying, "Each of you hold up a pencil, if you have one. Just one pencil." All of the students do so except for one child who does not have one. The teacher pulls one out of her desk and gives it to her. This child then holds up her pencil. . . .
>
> The teacher numbers each row and announces that she will tell the different rows to do something; and she wants to see how quietly each row can accomplish its assignment. She asks Row 1 to go to the pencil sharpener. These students quickly get up, push in their chairs, and walk to the pencil sharpener where they line up. The teacher comments to the whole class, "Oh, look at that! Everyone pushed in their chairs." While these students sharpen pencils, Row 2 is asked to go to the poster on the chalkboard and write their names on the happy face. Students in Row 2 get up, push in their chairs, and go to the happy face. Students in Row 3 are asked to get a piece of paper from the sink area and then come back to their seats in silence. Each child is complimented on how nicely he or she remembered to push in the chairs. At this point Row 4 is asked to go to the pencil sharpener, since Row 1 was back in their seats. Row 2 is then sent to the sink area, Row 3 to sign names

on the happy face chart. This rotation continues as each row in turn stands up, pushes chairs in, and goes to assigned places.[3]

During this segment, the teacher monitored the activity carefully and commented on how well the students remembered the rules and did not crowd each other.

In one study of first and fifth grade classes, threats and promises were used only 10% of the time.

This activity is fairly complicated. The class is broken into four groups, each of which has something different to do. The expectations for each student are clear, however, and the work can be accomplished in a short period of time. The activity gives the teacher information about how the class will behave when divided into small groups to move to different locations in the room. Since this frequently happens in elementary classrooms, the information is very useful. The students also learn that the teacher carefully watches how they push their chairs in and whether they crowd each other. This information tells the students that the teacher knows what they are doing in the classroom.

Stopping misbehavior early. When misbehavior does occur, successful classroom managers stop it early by repeating instructions, redirecting students to more acceptable behavior, or giving reprimands. They are able to intervene early because they are active in guiding activities and monitoring student conduct.

Teachers frequently use positive and negative sanctions to establish and enforce rules. It is important to remember, however, that stopping misbehavior is *not* the basis for achieving order in a classroom. In the absence of activities and a workable system of rules and procedures, stopping misbehavior will have little long-term effect. Indeed, concentrating on misbehavior to the extent that activities break down will actually prevent order from being established. Successful managers are seldom deflected from getting activities started and communicating rules for conduct.

In one study of first and fifth grade classes, teachers evaluated conduct publicly on the average of 15.89 times per hour, or 87 times a day, or an estimated 16,000 times a year.

Emphasizing activities rather than misbehavior at the beginning of the year is important when working with a class that is likely to be disorderly. In such a group it frequently happens that (a) several students are ready to join a disruption as soon as it is initiated, and (b) many of the other students are willing to act as a responsive audience for misbehavior. In other words, misbehaving students link together rapidly, and the rest of the class cheers them on. Under such circumstances, misbehavior by one student rapidly becomes a major public event that can easily stop an activity. A teacher who continually calls attention to misbehavior increases the audience effect and thus contributes to the breakdown of activities. In the long run, it is more useful to ignore minor infractions in order to protect activities. Such an approach is costly, however. Rules and procedures which are ignored at the beginning of the year may not be enforceable later.

3. The author is indebted to Carolyn M. Evertson, University of Texas at Austin, for providing a copy of this narrative.

Summary. How a class starts, then, shapes the rest of the year. Students expect teachers to set procedures for the class and enforce the rules. A teacher must, however, demonstrate an ability to manage the classroom skillfully. To verify this skillfulness, students collectively test the limits of the management system. Order in a classroom comes about when the teacher communicates: (a) a clear agenda; (b) knowledge about what is likely to happen in a classroom; and (c) a willingness to act decisively.

SELECTING AND ARRANGING ACTIVITIES

The beginning of the year is an important time, but the task of maintaining cooperation continues throughout the year. Consistent success in accomplishing this task requires an awareness of more general processes that underlie classroom management. Three categories of management processes are considered here. The first is *selecting and arranging activities.* Choosing activities and placing them in sequence establishes the framework for classroom order. The second category is *monitoring and timing.* These processes are essential to putting an activity into practice in a classroom. The final category consists of *ways of stopping misbehavior and disruptions.*

The Effects of an Activity

In selecting an activity, the teacher defines, organizes, and directs what a group of students are to do for a specific block of time. Once an activity is operating, it carries much of the burden of controlling behavior. Events become predictable. The teacher and students are able to anticipate what is likely to happen. The careful selection and arrangement of activities reduces the complexity of the classroom and furnishes a framework for order.

The amount of student involvement is important in keeping an activity going. An activity cannot control the behavior of students who are not involved. As the noninvolved group grows, the teacher is required to attend to more students who have nothing to do. Under such conditions, the possibility of disruption increases.

Phases of an Activity

There are three phases to the life history of an activity. Seatwork is an especially good example of this cycle. At the beginning of seatwork, engagement is usually low as students assemble materials and ask questions to clarify procedures. This is a time when experienced teachers monitor behavior closely and work to get the activity started.

During the middle phase of seatwork, involvement typically increases until most students at least appear to be working. During this phase the demand for continuous teacher vigilance is often reduced.

Toward the end of the activity, involvement begins to decline as students complete their work and prepare to hand it in. In some instances, there may be a frantic race to finish on time. As an activity comes to a close, the teacher must organize and direct behavior until the next activity begins.

Several factors affect student involvement in activities. Some of these factors are: (a) the familiarity of an activity to the students, (b) the characteristics of the students themselves, (c) the characteristics of different activities, (d) the sequence of activities, and (e) accountability for work. Experienced teachers consider these factors when selecting and arranging activities.

The Familiarity of Activities

Involvement is usually high when students are familiar with an activity. This effect can be explained as follows. Teachers often use routines to reduce confusion in classrooms. Routines are standard procedures for putting names on papers, seeking teacher assistance, and handing in papers, for example. As an activity is repeated several times with different content, many of its segments become routine. Routinized activities are easier to begin and more resistant to the effects of interruptions because students are aware of procedures and their sequence. Students know what is supposed to happen next. As a result, compliance is automatic, and less direct intervention by the teacher is necessary.

Because familiar activities have stability and continuity, effective teachers rely on a few basic activities which they repeat at regular intervals. They also carefully select the days on which to attempt new activities.

Characteristics of Students

The eagerness of students to participate in classroom events also influences how well activities go. If students are inclined to disrupt class, then activities will be difficult to start and sustain.

Metz has given detailed descriptions of low and high ability classes in junior high schools.[4] In this case, the same teachers taught both tracks, but there were striking differences in the way classes were conducted across these two levels. In high ability classes, students actively engaged in academic work, valued whole class discussions of subject matter, completed assignments on schedule, and initiated questions and comments. The students were responsive, and few directions or reprimands were required to maintain order. The overall climate was academic and businesslike, and the pace was smooth and rapid. In low ability classes, students were restless and disruptive. They were also persistent when misbehaving and required directions and reprimands frequently. Order had to be established continuously and the pace of activities was slow.

4. Mary H. Metz, *Classrooms and Corridors: The Crisis of Authority in Desegregated Secondary Schools* (Berkeley, Ca: University of California Press, 1978).

In the average elementary classroom, in high achieving classes, average student engagement is approximately 80 to 85%.

These differences are extreme, but they indicate the adjustments teachers must make to sustain activities over a long period of time in classrooms. Knowledge about a particular group of students helps a teacher select activities that are likely to succeed. Especially with low ability students, teachers should begin the year with activities that are organized simply and contain work that can be easily accomplished. They must also give explicit rules and procedures, and work continuously to sustain involvement. In this way, teachers establish a framework for order that enables them to use a variety of activities later in the year.

Characteristics of Different Activities

Some activities are more difficult to use than others. This section focuses on some of the features of activities that affect their use in classrooms. These features include the general format of an activity, the arrangements of materials and participants, and the nature of the work students are expected to do.

Format. The format of an activity affects student involvement. In general, student engagement is higher when a teacher leads or paces an activity than when students pace themselves. Thus involvement is usually greater when students are participating in a whole class recitation than when they are working individually. To increase involvement, experienced teachers orchestrate seatwork by moving around the room to check students' progress and by announcing periodically how much time is left to finish. Teachers pace seatwork especially at the beginning of the year.

In the average elementary classroom, average student engagement is approximately 84% in teacher-led activities and 70% in self-paced activities.

Arrangement. Involvement is also influenced by the arrangement of materials and people. Involvement is usually higher (a) when individuals are protected from intrusions by other students and (b) when there is a single continuous source of information. A seatwork assignment in which each student has a complete set of materials, for example, will have higher involvement than a situation in which students must share the same resources. Similarly, a whole class presentation from one source, such as a teacher or a record, will have higher involvement than a group discussion in which there are several participants from different parts of the room.

Classwork. Every activity includes a role that students are expected to play, whether it be answering questions, listening and taking notes, or completing a workbook exercise. The amount of involvement in an activity depends on how many of the students can do what is expected.

Participation in some activities requires a high degree of skill, such as the ability to answer analytical questions, do word problems, or write an original essay. Some students will not be able to be involved in an activity which includes demanding work

assignments. Such activities are also difficult to get started because of student questions about procedures and requirements. Effective managers anticipate these possible problems of student involvement, prepare introductory lessons carefully, and provide additional help to students who need it.

Summary. The characteristics of an activity affect the complexity of the classroom and, therefore, the demands on a teacher's management skills. To provide a full range of valuable educational experiences, a teacher must establish the conditions for order in the classroom. The solution is not to avoid complex activities. Rather, a teacher must anticipate areas of possible management problems, prepare students carefully for different activities, schedule activities appropriately, and be willing to work hard to gain and maintain involvement.

The Sequence of Activities

Life in classrooms is lived for several months. Inevitably, a teacher must arrange activities in a sequence. A teacher may select activities which are valuable and necessary but arrange them poorly. For instance, rehearsing procedures for a fire drill is certainly a defensible activity. Opening the first day of school with this activity would lead to chaos.

In the average elementary classroom, during academic activities, the class is actually engaged in working approximately 75% of the time.

Rules for Sequence. Precise rules for sequencing activities are not readily available. The beginning of school is a critical period. Studies of effective classroom management suggest the following general principle:

> If circumstances are likely to make students easily distractible (for example, days before vacations or periods before pep rallies), schedule activities that are familiar to students, have simple organizational structures, and require work that is easily accomplished.

Activities that have these characteristics generate high involvement from students and are resistant to disruption.

An Example of Sequence. Good and Grouws have outlined a sequence of activities for fourth grade mathematics lessons. This sequence incorporates findings from teaching effectiveness studies and is consistent with what is known about successful management. There is also experimental evidence that use of this sequence promotes higher achievement in basic mathematics skills.

Daily Review (First eight minutes except Mondays)

- Review the concepts and skills associated with the homework
- Collect and deal with homework assignments
- Ask several mental computation exercises

Development (About 20 minutes)

- Briefly focus on prerequisite skills and concepts
- Focus on meaning and promoting student understanding by using lively explanations, demonstrations, process explanations, illustrations, and so on
- Assess student comprehension
  Using process/product questions (active interaction)
  Using controlled practice
- Repeat and elaborate on the meaning portion as necessary

In the average elementary classroom, approximately 25% of the time is allocated to music, art, physical education, and other nonacademic activities.

Seatwork (About 15 minutes)

- Provide uninterrupted successful practice
- Momentum — keep the ball rolling — get everyone involved, then sustain involvement
- Alerting — let students know their work will be checked at the end of the period
- Accountability — check the students' work

Homework Assignment

- Assign on a regular basis at the end of each math class except Fridays
- Should involve about 15 minutes of work to be done at home
- Should include one or two review problems

Special Reviews

- Weekly review/maintenance
  Conduct during the first 20 minutes each Monday
  Focus on skills and concepts covered during the previous week
- Monthly review/maintenance
  Conduct every fourth Monday
  Focus on skills and concepts covered since the last monthly review[5]

Transitions. A focus on sequence calls attention to transitions, or the time between activities. Transitions are critical moments in classroom management. During a transition, control of behavior shifts from an activity to the teacher. If the teacher fails to manage a transition successfully, starting the next activity will be difficult. (Remember that student involvement is typically low at the beginning of an activity.) Consistent failure to manage transitions will lead to a breakdown of the activity system.

In the average elementary classroom, approximately 15 to 20% of the time is taken up with non-instructional activities, such as transitions between activities and housekeeping, and this time seems to be constant across classrooms.

Effective managers are active in the classroom during transitions. They give instructions, answer questions, and monitor movement. In other words, they organize and direct transitions to make them smoother and shorter. They also teach explicit procedures for making transitions to help reduce confusion.

The problems of managing transitions depend on the changes that must be made for the next activity to begin. If a major reorganization of the group or a work area is necessary, the transition will be longer and the possibility of disorder greater. Transitions are also more difficult if there is no clear ending point for the preceding activity. When students are working in a self-paced activity, for example, completion times will vary so that it is not clear when the activity is over. Teacher paced activities, on the other hand, have a clear end point and hence the movement into the transition is smoother.

Accountability for Work

If students know that they are responsible for the content of an activity, they work harder and longer. Accountability for work is connected to evaluation and grading in classrooms. At the secondary level, students frequently ask whether an exercise will be graded or whether information being presented will be on a test. But even elementary students are often aware of what they need to know for school. If students have the impression that work will not be graded or that any answer is acceptable, then involvement is low unless the activity is exceptionally interesting.

In one study of first and fifth grade classes, 65% of rewards and punishments were directed at individuals.

The form that accountability takes depends on the type of activity:

5. Thomas L. Good and Douglas A. Grouws, "Teaching and Mathematics Learning," *Educational Leadership* 37 (1979): 39-45.

1. In discussions or recitations, teachers often hold students accountable for paying attention to what is going on at the moment. This can be done by calling on nonvolunteers as well as volunteers and by distributing questions to nearly all students in the class. Some teachers devise systems for giving credit for participation. Without considerable experience in management, however, recording each instance of participation and judging the quality of answers can be difficult.
2. During extended lectures (10 minutes or more), teachers maintain accountability by inserting an occasional question or by having students take notes. When notes are being taken, teachers often give explicit instructions about what they expect in the notes. In some cases, teachers collect notes and grade them.
3. In seatwork activities, accountability is handled by grading the work that is done and by moving around the room to check on progress. Many effective managers formally inspect student papers during an activity to grade progress or the quality of the work.

From the perspective of accountability, an ideal activity (a) contains work that the students can do within the allotted time and (b) results in a product that can be judged validly.

MONITORING AND TIMING

The selection and arrangement of activities sets the framework for order, but successful management also depends on what a teacher does while an activity is occurring in the classroom. An activity must be shaped to fit immediate circumstances. A teacher must continually adjust an activity to meet changing conditions in a classroom. In addition, a teacher must be able to anticipate possible disruptions and react immediately to prevent disorder from spreading.

Two closely related processes are especially important in the management of an activity: monitoring and timing.

Monitoring

To adjust an activity, a teacher must gather information about what is happening while an activity is occurring. Without such information, it is impossible to make the many on-the-spot decisions necessary to manage an activity.

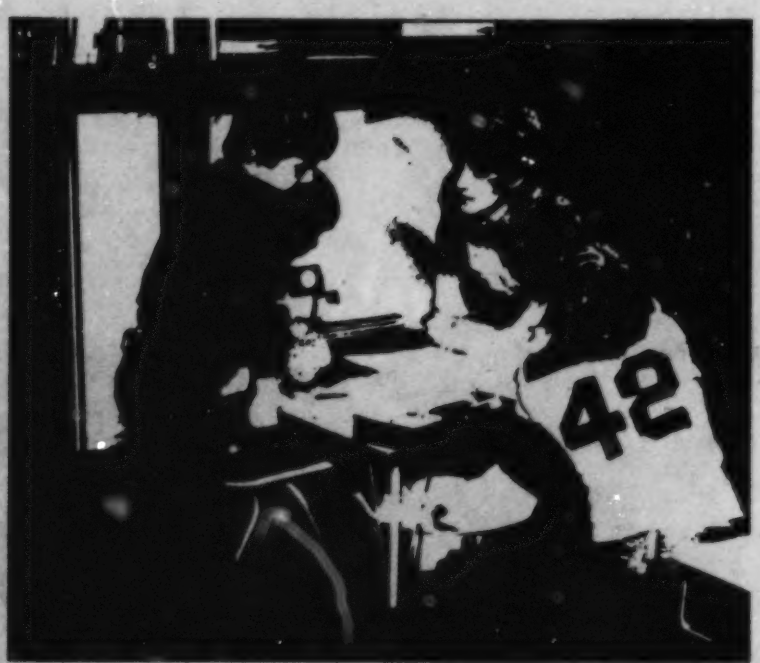
Selective attention. Successful monitoring requires that a teacher look; the classroom must be scanned visually at regular intervals. Remembering to scan can be especially difficult when a teacher is giving help to an individual student or is concentrating on presenting information. A teacher must also be able to see. Visual barriers in the room can prevent a teacher from seeing what is going on.

Desk arrangements, such as U-shapes or circles, can force teachers to localize attention to only part of the group. Many teachers increase the quality of their monitoring by moving around the room frequently.

Efficient monitoring is more than simply looking. A teacher must know when to look and what to look for. Classrooms are complex environments and must be monitored selectively. Teachers who know what is likely to happen in a classroom are able to anticipate events and see signs that indicate the direction an activity is taking. A teacher who is aware that a particular student is easily distracted from assignments, for example, can watch that student carefully whenever an interruption occurs.

Most monitoring is done at the level of the total classroom. Teachers watch an activity in operation. When scanning a group, teachers are especially sensitive to student behaviors that signal a possible breakdown of an activity. For example, experienced teachers readily notice student concealment: putting a hand over the mouth, hiding behind books, or furtive glances at the teacher while turning around in a chair. Teacher attention is caught by discrepancies from expected behavior, and especially by those discrepancies that are likely to lead to disorder.

Monitoring different activities. Certain activities are more difficult to monitor than others. The number of simultaneous events within an activity will obviously complicate the environment that must be



watched. For example, breaking the class into several small groups, each of which is to work on different content, creates a complicated situation to monitor.

In addition, the role the teacher must play in an activity will affect monitoring. Activities in which the teacher is a key participant — for example, lectures or whole class discussions — require that a teacher divide attention between monitoring the activity and keeping track of his or her own performance.

In these instances, a teacher must juggle several different types of information at once. In contrast, simple activities in which the teacher does not have to play an active role, such as seatwork with a uniform assignment, reduce the information load on the teacher. In simpler activities the teacher can stand back and watch without bringing the activity to a halt. The problems of handling information in complex activities may explain why seatwork is used about two-thirds of the time in the average classroom. Though student involvement in seatwork is lower, monitoring the activity is more manageable.

Monitoring and control. The act of monitoring itself — watching and moving about the room — prevents misbehavior. The teacher is likely to be present when misbehavior occurs. When students know that a teacher is consistently aware of what is happening in the room, they are less likely to misbehave because they expect to be caught.

Teachers communicate their awareness to students in at least three ways:

1. By commenting on what students are doing: "I like the way you are not crowding each other at the pencil sharpener."
2. By intervening early to stop misbehavior: "Do you have a question?" as a student raises his hand to throw a piece of paper across the room.
3. By intervening when least expected: "Becky, please put that note in the trash" while turning to write something on the board.

Summary. Effective managers do not always act on each piece of information they gather, but appropriate action is impossible if the information is not gathered. Moreover, the decision not to act comes after the incident has been seen. Even when effective managers ignore an incident, they usually show by their facial expressions that they are aware the incident took place.

In the average elementary classroom, approximately 55 to 60% of the time is allocated to academic activities, such as mathematics, reading, and science.

Timing

The most critical factor in management is *timing* — knowing when to act. Mistakes in timing can eventually upset even the most elegantly planned activity.

Aspects of timing have been considered already in discussions of the beginning of the year, transitions, and monitoring. This section will focus on two areas that seem especially significant for effective management: the timing of interventions, and the pacing of activities.

Timing interventions. Early intervention is essential. If the situation requires action, it should come immediately. Early intervention tells students that a teacher is aware of what is going on in the room. Intervening early also comes to grips with three additional problems:

1. **Misbehavior spreads.** When a teacher intervenes early, few students are typically involved in the incident. The teacher also has a greater chance of catching the real instigator.
2. **The audience for misbehavior grows.** When misbehavior is stopped early, only a few students have been distracted from their work to watch.
3. **The action required to stop misbehavior increases.** Stopping misbehavior early can often be done with a look or a brief private comment. Once several students are involved and an audience is ready, a teacher must make an impressive show of strength and power to restore order.

The most common threat to order in schools and classrooms is persistent misconduct (skipping class, truancy, tardiness, disobedience) rather than criminal disruption, and these same problems have existed since the beginning of formal schooling in America.

The central point is that misbehavior rapidly becomes more public as time passes. Consequently, the actions a teacher must take are more disruptive.

Effective managers avoid the consequences of late interventions by anticipating what might happen and heading off misbehavior before it occurs. To do this, teachers must have a store of working knowledge about how classrooms actually operate. Most beginning teachers lack this knowledge of classrooms and therefore find management especially difficult.

Pacing activities. During a class meeting, a teacher must decide how long an activity should last. Part of this decision is made during planning, when a teacher estimates the likely duration of an activity. While the activity is occurring, a teacher must also be alert for signs that the activity has gone too long because many students are restless, or it is coming to a close early because most students have finished the assignment.

The decision to extend or shorten a single activity obviously affects the time left for other activities. If an activity runs too long, there will not be enough time to finish everything. If an activity is too short, there will be "dead" time at the end of the meeting. Ideally, the last activity will finish as the meeting ends. Given the complexity of classrooms, coming out even requires experience and flexibility.

Within a school, classrooms are the safest places to be. Most crime and violence occurs in halls, stairways, and cafeterias.

Pace can also refer to the movement of events within an activity. Student involvement is difficult to sustain when the pace of an activity is very slow. Students become restless and attention wanders. In well managed classrooms, the pace within activities is fairly rapid. Teachers keep the pace going by moving around the room, providing students opportunities to participate, and watching for early signs of inattention.

Summary. Monitoring and timing are basic processes required to manage activities in classrooms. These processes enable a teacher to fit an activity into a particular setting and adjust it to changing conditions. A consistent failure to gather information about what is going on in a classroom, adjust the pace of activities in light of this information, and intervene when required will eventually lead to a breakdown of order. The efficiency of monitoring and timing depends upon a teacher's store of knowledge about how classrooms work and what students are likely to do. A large part of this knowledge about classrooms is acquired by direct experience in a classroom environment.

STOPPING MISBEHAVIOR

The need for classroom management and discipline is most apparent when order breaks down. As a result, much has been written about ways to stop misbehavior once it has occurred. But this topic is tricky. Teachers use sanctions for misbehavior frequently in classrooms. Sanctions are the primary means by which rules for conduct are established. Yet, it is wrong to assume that classroom order is held in place by reprimands, reinforcement schedules, or interviews with disruptive students. Indeed, the need to restore order is a sign that the mechanisms which establish and maintain order are not working. Actions taken to stop misbehavior or restore order must be seen as *part* of an overall system of management;

they are not the origins of order in classrooms. When used inappropriately, such actions can actually contribute to disorder. In this section two important aspects of stopping misbehavior are considered: (a) deciding whether to intervene; and (b) the characteristics of effective interventions.

Deciding Whether to Intervene

Only about 8% of schools in the nation have serious problems of crime and disruption.

One critical problem for teachers, especially beginning teachers, is knowing whether an intervention is required. Few teachers see everything that goes on in the room, and many choose to ignore much of what they see. However, effective managers are able to recognize an act which is likely to lead to a serious disruption of an activity.

There are at least four aspects of the problem of selecting occasions for intervention:

1. **The act itself.** Some acts — fighting, throwing metal objects across the room, open defiance of a directive — require a response from the teacher. But these acts are rare in most classrooms. More commonly a teacher must decide whether an intervention is required on the basis of immediate circumstances. One rule is helpful: if all students look expectantly to the teacher after an incident occurs, then act.
2. **Who is involved.** The actions of some students are more disruptive than those of others. The slightest provocation by some students will spread rapidly to involve others. Other students have little effect on the rest of the group. Teachers treat students differently because the consequences of their actions are different.

In an average month, less than 1% of secondary teachers and less than 2% of secondary students are attacked and only a small percent of these need medical care.

3. **When the act occurs.** The same act on different occasions is handled differently. Whether an intervention is required depends on the nature of the activity in operation. Some activities require that students move around the room and talk with each other. Other activities require that they remain seated and quiet or that they take turns talking. Actions by individual students in lectures or recitations, in contrast to seatwork or small group settings, are more public and have greater consequences for management. Reprimands in whole class activities, therefore, are typically more frequent than in self-paced activities.
4. **The priorities of the moment.** If a teacher is having difficulty getting an activity started, it is often more beneficial to talk publicly about subject matter rather than misbehavior. This is especially true at the beginning of the year or when a teacher is working with an uncooperative group. In such situations a teacher can ignore minor infractions in order to concentrate on ushering the activity along until it takes over the control of behavior.

Recognizing misbehavior is not always easy. Students often try to conceal misbehavior by appearing to be working. Experienced teachers spot concealment as an early sign of a possible disruption. They also watch student demeanor. Students who only appear to be working are often louder and more lively than those who are actually working. By monitoring these signs, teachers are able to intervene early if necessary.

The amount of crime and violence in a school is related to the amount of crime and violence in the community surrounding the school.

Teaching students with a different ethnic or cultural background can be difficult. In such situations, teachers may not recognize a potentially disruptive act. They may also miss the ways in which students communicate with each other in class. Effective management in these classrooms requires that teachers spend time learning about the students' cultures.

Effective Interventions

Once a decision is made to act, what can be done? If an intervention is made early enough, a glance to indicate awareness of misbehavior or a move toward the student involved is often sufficient. Teachers can also redirect a student by asking a question or offering assistance for doing the assigned work.

A simple verbal reprimand is by far the most common technique for stopping misbehavior. Effective reprimands are short, mild, and private to avoid disrupting an activity further. Early reprimands are more likely to have these characteristics. All reprimands should be clear. They should specify the misbehavior and direct the student to appropriate conduct: "Stop talking and work on Exercise Four." It is also useful to pause briefly after issuing a directive and continue looking at the student or students who have been reprimanded. It often happens that students will look down as soon as the reprimand is given and then look up again. If they see the teacher still watching them, they usually get back to work.

Most experienced teachers avoid explicit threats as a means of stopping misbehavior. Threats often backfire, especially if they are extreme and the students know that the teacher cannot back them up (e.g., "You will have to stay after school the rest of the year"). If used at all, threats are usually indirect (e.g., "What's your phone number, in case I ever have to talk to your parents"). The best time to discuss punishment is before misbehavior occurs or privately with a student after class. During class, punishment should be given or withheld, not threatened.

In the case of serious disturbances, proximity is important. Shouting matches across the room are seldom fruitful. In addition, a teacher usually has to make a show of force. Especially in secondary classrooms, students cannot back down unless there is a clear public reason to do so.

Disruptive Students

To this point, attention has been focused on managing classrooms rather than individual students. In the case of seriously disruptive

students, the teacher is usually required to deal with the problem outside of the classroom also. In this area, there is a large literature which can only be mentioned briefly here. Recommendations usually fall in one or more of the following categories:

A small group of "hard core" students is responsible for most of the crime and disruption in schools.

1. **Punishment.** The pros and cons of punishment are well known and the controversy will probably never be resolved. The options include detention, isolation, loss of privileges, suspension, and paddling. Punishment usually requires involvement by school administrators and parents and is typically controlled by school policies.
2. **Behavior modification plans.** A large literature has developed around the use of contingencies of reinforcement to reduce disruptive behavior. The basic premise is that teachers should reinforce appropriate behaviors to increase their frequency. Remarkable results have been reported with this approach, but it is often difficult to use without outside help. Some experts recommend a more cognitive approach to behavior modification in which students write a contract that clearly spells out what will be done to improve conduct. Finally, some have recommended behavior training in which students learn how to behave appropriately in the classroom.
3. **Interviews.** Many specialists from the fields of clinical and counseling psychology have recommended interviews with students to seek the causes of their misbehaviors. Parents are often involved in these counseling sessions. Special training is usually required for using this approach. Therefore, students are often referred to school counselors or to outside agencies for assistance.

One common characteristic of these recommendations for working with disruptive students is that they focus on a one-to-one level of interaction. As a result, they are not always applicable to the immediate task of managing classrooms.

Conclusion

Order in the classroom does not result from isolated, unrelated elements strung together in some random fashion. Order is maintained by carefully planned and orchestrated movements involving the selection and arranging of activities and the monitoring and timing of their use. Given the complex adjustments a teacher must make, achieving consistent success in managing a classroom is a demanding task.

MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING

This booklet describes a foundation for effective classroom management. Throughout, an attempt has been made to reflect what is known about effective teaching and about the realities of life in classrooms. Clearly, there is more to learn about classroom management. Significant progress has been made, however, in understanding this basic task of teaching.

In the long run, most teachers learn to manage their classrooms successfully. But this accomplishment is by no means easy. Teaching in classrooms is not a matter of following inflexible rules. Rather, teaching involves adjusting to the multiple demands of a complex environment. At a very minimum, effective management requires: (1) extensive knowledge of what is likely to happen in classrooms; (2) an ability to process a large amount of information rapidly; and (3) skill in carrying out effective actions over a long period of time.

One message is clear: teaching is not improved by simply prescribing an ideal set of conditions for learning. The real work of teaching is to bring these conditions about in classrooms. Classroom management is the basis for creating these conditions. In this light, effective teaching requires effective classroom management.

The schools must continue to resemble, in many ways, the older order in which a single individual imposed his will upon the group, and the conception of school discipline must continue to reflect some measure of arbitrary dominance and repression.

William Chandler Bagley, 1914.

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